

## Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: GWERTZMAN ARTICLE ON ARMS AID FOR AFRICA

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE, "U.S. STEPS UP OFFERS OF ARMS TO  
AFRICANS: "BY BERNARD GWERTZMAN, APPEARED IN THE JULY 28  
NEW YORK TIMES".

WASHINGTON, JULY 27 - THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, IN  
ANOTHER MAJOR POLICY DECISION ON SUPPLYING MILITARY EQUIP-  
MENT TO AFRICAN NATIONS, SAID TODAY THAT IT HAD INFORMED  
THE SUDAN THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS PREPARED TO CONTRI-

BUTE TO ITS "LEGITIMATE DEFENSE NEEDS."

THIS DISCLOSURE BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT CAME A DAY  
AFTER IT HAD BEEN MADE KNOWN THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS  
READY TO SELL MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO SOMALIA AND WAS SEEKING  
CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF MORE THAN 200 MILLION DOLLARS  
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IN MILITARY SALES TO EGYPT. MOREOVER, A DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL

SAID LATE TODAY THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD "CONSIDER  
SYMPATHETICALLY" ANY MILITARY REQUESTS FROM CHAD.

OF CONCERN TO ALL THESE AFRICAN COUNTRIES IS SOVIET  
MILITARY HELP TO OTHERS IN THE AREA. EGYPT, THE SUDAN,

SOMALIA AND CHAD HAVE RESPECTIVELY EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT SOVIET AID TO LIBYA OR ETHIOPIA OR BOTH AND HAVE ASKED FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE FROM THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER COUNTRIES.

OFFICIAL EXPLAINS U.S. DECISION

ONE STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL SAID THAT THE ADMINISTRATION, AFTER A LONG STUDY OF THE ISSUES INVOLVED, HAD DECIDED TO BECOME A MILITARY SUPPLIER IN THE REGION FOR TWO MAJOR REASONS: TO CHALLENGE THE SOVIET UNION IN A STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT PART OF THE WORLD AND THEREBY AVOID GIVING THE IMPRESSION THAT IT WAS PASSIVELY WATCHING THE RUSSIANS MAKE INROADS THERE, AND TO DEMONSTRATE STRONG SUPPORT FOR PRESIDENT ANWAR EL-SADAT OF EGYPT, WHO TOGETHER WITH CROWN PRINCE FAHD OF SAUDI ARABIA HAD REPEATEDLY URGED THE UNITED STATES TO BECOME INVOLVED.

IN ADDITION, EGYPT, SOMALIA AND THE SUDAN HAVE ALL RELIED ON THE SOVIET UNION FOR MILITARY HELP.

BY PROMISING TO ASSIST THEM THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WANTS TO SHOW THEM AND OTHER COUNTRIES THAT IF THEY BREAK WITH THE RUSSIANS THEY CAN COUNT ON HELP FROM THE UNITED STATES, THE OFFICIAL SAID.

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THE EXTENT OF THE AMERICAN MILITARY ASSISTANCE HAS NOT BEEN DECIDED UPON. HODDING CARTER 3D, THE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN, SAID TODAY THAT "WE'VE INFORMED THE SUDANESE GOVERNMENT THAT THE UNITED STATES IS PREPARED TO CONTRIBUTE TO SUDAN'S LEGITIMATE DEFENSE NEEDS."

HE SAID THAT "AS A FIRST STEP," THE UNITED STATES WOULD SEND EARLY NEXT MONTH A

JOINT SURVEY TEAM OF ARMY, AIR FORCE, NAVY AND STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS "TO DETERMINE" THESE NEEDS."

PRESIDENT GAAFAR AL-NIMEIRY OF THE SUDAN WAS ALLOWED IN APRIL TO BUY SIX C-L30 HERCULES MILITARY TRANSPORT PLANES. HE REQUESTED THE SALE OF F-5-E FIGHTER PLANES AND ADVANCED GROUND DEFENSE EQUIPMENT, BUT NO DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN ON THAT, MR. CARTER SAID.

THE SOMALIS, BACKED BY THE SAUDI ARABIANS, HAVE REPORTEDLY ASKED FOR RIFLES AND OTHER LIGHT ARTILLERY EQUIPMENT. THE CHAD REQUEST IS RECENT AND IS A RESULT OF CONCERN THAT LIBYA HAS DESIGNS ON NORTHERN CHAD, WHICH

HAS DEPOSITS OF URANIUM.

THE POLITICAL PICTURE HAS BEEN COMPLICATED IN THE REGION BY A DRAMATIC SWITCH IN ALLEGIANCES BY SOMALIA AND ETHIOPIA. THE ETHIOPIANS, WHO HAD BEEN TRAINED AND SUPPLIED BY THE UNITED STATES FOR YEARS, BROKE WITH WASHINGTON AFTER A LEFTIST RADICAL REGIME TOOK CONTROL IN ADDIS ABABA AND ASKED FOR SOVIET HELP IN PUTTING DOWN THE SECESSIONISTS IN THE STRATEGICALLY SITUATED COASTAL PROVINCE OF ERITREA.

THIS ALARMED THE SOMALIS, WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN AIDED BY MOSCOW. IT LED THEM TO TURN TO OTHER COUNTRIES. THE UNITED STATES, WORRIED ABOUT A POSSIBLE SOVIET  
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PRESENCE IN BOTH SOMALIA AND ETHIOPIA, HAS MOVED TO ACCEDE TO SOMALI REQUESTS FOR HELP.

IN A POLICY SPEECH ON JULY 1, SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS R. VANCE SAID THAT "WE WILL CONSIDER SYMPATHETICALLY APPEALS FOR ASSISTANCE FROM STATES WHICH ARE THREATENED BY A BUILDUP OF FOREIGN MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND ADVISORS ON THEIR BORDERS, IN THE HORN AND ELSEWHERE IN AFRICA."

YET MR. VANCE AND OTHERS SEEM AWARE THAT BECOMING A MILITARY SUPPLIER IN AFRICA RUNS SOMEWHAT COUNTER TO THE BROAD SWEEP OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S EFFORT TO HOLD DOWN TRANSFERS OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS.

IN HIS JULY SPEECH, MR. VANCE SAID THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH MR. CARTER'S ARMS POLICY MADE PUBLIC IN MAY, "ARMS TRANSFERS TO AFRICA WILL BE AN EXCEPTIONAL TOOL OF OUR POLICY AND WILL BE USED ONLY AFTER THE MOST CAREFUL CONSIDERATION."

THERE HAVE BEEN UNPRODUCTIVE TALKS WITH THE RUSSIANS, OFFICIALS SAID, ABOUT LIMITING ARMS TO AFRICA.

MR. CARTER HAS PERSONALLY ENDORSED A POLICY OF INVOLVEMENT IN AREAS LONG UNDER SOVIET SWAY. IN A STATEMENT LAST MONTH TO MAGAZINE PUBLISHERS, HE SAID THAT "MY OWN INCLINATION" IS TO "AGGRESSIVELY CHALLENGE, IN A PEACEFUL WAY, OF COURSE, THE SOVIET UNION AND OTHERS FOR INFLUENCE." HE CITED SOMALIA AS AN AREA OPEN TO CHALLENGE. VANCE

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